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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, we thank You for the beautiful differences in the human family, for its varied shapes and sizes, its features and colors, its abilities and talents. Deliver us from the forces that would destroy our unity by eliminating our diversity.

Bless the Members of this body. Help them in their debates to distinguish between substance and semantics, between rhetoric and reality. Free them from personal and partisan preoccupations that would defeat their aspirations and deprive Americans of just and equitable solutions. May our lawmakers avoid the works of darkness and put on Your armor of light.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, June 11, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, section 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of Senator MCCONNELL, there will be a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each. The majority will control the first 30 minutes; the Republicans will control the second 30 minutes.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3044, the Consumer-First Energy Act. The first 4 hours of debate will be equally divided and controlled in 30-minute alternating blocks of time, with the majority controlling the first 30 minutes and Republicans controlling the next 30 minutes.

Upon conclusion of the controlled time, Senators will be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

As a reminder, yesterday, I filed cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 3101, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act. That cloture vote will occur tomorrow morning.

### HIGH COST OF ENERGY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when President Bush took office, one of the airplanes flying us to the west coast, or to the Midwest, or to the southern part of the States from Washington, DC, the

cost of a tank of fuel for that airplane was 15 percent of the overall cost of the airline. Today, after 7 years and 6 months of President Bush, it now costs those airline companies almost 50 percent of the total costs. So it has gone from 15 percent to almost 50 percent.

All over America, airlines are eliminating flights that are full. Why? Because those airplanes cost too much to run. Every airplane flying across America today is losing money—every commercial airline—because the cost of fuel is so high. Think about that. Eighty-five percent of the cost of an airline could be other things when President Bush took office; now it is 50 percent. Airlines are in deep trouble.

I repeat, airplanes taking off from Washington, DC, or other places in America, and are full, with every seat taken, those flights are being eliminated because that type of airplane uses too much fuel. They are doing everything they can to eliminate the need for extra fuel. They are hosing down airplanes to save a quart of fuel here and there.

Mr. President, it is a desperate situation that the American airline industry has. In addition, our airlines are having difficulty competing with the European airlines. They pay in euros; we pay in dollars. We pay approximately, let's say, \$1.40 per gallon—we know that is wrong, but the mathematical calculation is the same—and Europe pays about 80 cents. We cannot compete.

Mr. President, when President Bush took office, a gallon of gasoline in a motor vehicle was less than \$1.50. Now, this morning, it is announced that the average cost in America is over \$4.05 a gallon. That is what has happened during the Bush administration.

The day before yesterday, I met with the National Association of Manufacturers. The biggest concern they have is the cost of energy. One relatively small American manufacturer who has been quite successful—totally American—said this year, so far he has to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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